

per year in Medicare benefits taken from each of them in order to give 1.1 million of America's richest people a \$20,000 tax break.

Now if the Republicans want to have a substantive debate about how to improve Medicare and rein in its costs to ensure future solvency, then let us have that talk. But the Republicans' current effort is not about that. It is about finding ways to pay for tax cuts for the wealthy under the guise of saving Medicare.

Mr. Speaker, Republicans are not so stealthy that their Robin Hood-in-reverse crusade will go unnoticed by seniors.

#### MEDICARE

(Mr. LARGENT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LARGENT. Mr. Speaker, Medicare is not a Republican issue—it is not a Democrat issue—it is an American issue. Recently, a bipartisan group appointed by both Republican and Democrat administrations reported to the Congress that Medicare will go bankrupt within 7 years if we take no action.

I believe we must prevent bankruptcy by simplifying and strengthening Medicare. We must simplify the system so that Medicare patients can more easily understand the program. In addition, we must strengthen Medicare to make it financially safe and secure for both current and future beneficiaries.

We must work to ensure that senior Americans have the same rights to health care services as Members of Congress.

In response to critics who are already claiming that this reform is a cut in the Medicare Program, I say this is simply not true. By enacting these modest reforms, Medicare will continue to increase—just at a slower rate.

In fact, costs per beneficiary will continue to increase from \$4,800 per participant in 1995, to \$6,400 per recipient in 2002. Now you tell me, how is this a cut?

To play politics with this issue does not help in finding a solution to this problem. To do nothing is totally irresponsible, and unacceptable.

#### AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

(Mrs. CLAYTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend President Clinton for his eloquent, thoughtful, and perceptive statement on a very sensitive and difficult subject—affirmative action.

The President outlined an approach to this issue which not only conforms to the state of the law, including the Adarand case, but takes into account the muddled history of discrimination in this Nation, and takes into account

the concerns that some have raised about affirmative action.

I agree with the President that fraud and abuse, fronts and pass-throughs, in affirmative action programs should not and will not be tolerated.

I also agree with the President that reverse discrimination, quotas, and promoting unqualified individuals has no place in our society.

The President's words went a long way to begin the important process of healing in America—urging us to "reach beyond our fears and our divisions".

The President pointed out that, "When affirmative action is done right, it is flexible, it is fair, and it works."

While we begin to debate the issues surrounding affirmative action we must not get caught up in the political rhetoric and fervor that plays on fears and insecurities. We must focus on the realities and the meaningful, productive, work left to be done.

#### WHERE IS THE DEMOCRAT'S MEDICARE PLAN?

(Mr. KIM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KIM. Mr. speaker, I would like to talk about Medicare this morning. Let us take a look at this chart closely. The red one is the existing plan which is leading to bankruptcy. The red one, bottom, is trust fund balance. As you can see, in the year 2002 the money will be totally depleted.

The blue one is the Republican plan. What we are trying to do is slow down the increase, slow down the rate of increase.

Right above is the green plan, which is the Clinton plan. As you can see, the Clinton plan, the Republican plan, there are not that many differences. The only difference is the Republican plan tries to save Medicare, which is 7 years, and the Clinton plan is stretching out to 10 years.

My colleagues from the other side are complaining and bashing and attacking us. Let us see what their plan is.

Here it is. Nothing. They have absolutely no plan, no idea, no vision, except attack and attack and bash. I think it is silly.

#### LET US NOT ROB OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE

(Mr. ENGEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, there go our Republican friends again. First they cut Medicare to give tax breaks to the rich, and now they are cutting education, our children's future, to give tax breaks to the rich.

A subcommittee today is cutting \$3.9 billion off education, robbing America's children. Goals 2000, setting education standards, cut; safe and drug-free schools, cut; chapter 1 funding to

help our schools, cut; Eisenhower Program for teacher training, cut; and adult and vocational training, cut. And why? To give tax breaks for the rich.

What will this mean to middle class America? More students per class, and local and State property taxes increasing. Student loans were taken away from our children by the Republicans, and now, on top of Medicare, they are going to cut education again.

These are middle-class kids that are going to suffer. Eighty-nine percent of jobs created in this country require postsecondary training. What are the Republicans doing for that? Cut again.

We have a plan. It is a plan of compassion. Let us fix what needs to be fixed, but let us not cut and rob our children's future.

#### FRAUD IN MEDICARE

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, Medicare was established to help our seniors, not to make unscrupulous companies wealthy at their expense.

Today I am talking about the fraud in Medicare. Listen to the items that ABC Home Health Care put on their Medicare tab: Maid service payments for condominiums; golf pro shop expenses; airplane and automobile expenses for personal trips; and lobbying expenses.

They use promotional and marketing gimmicks such as gourmet popcorn, golf tees, earrings, cufflinks, combs, and sewing kits to recruit new members.

This is not a club but a home health care service. We should all be concerned.

Taxpayers are footing the bill for these luxury items.

Money was no object because ABC Home Health Care put it on the Medicare tab. Medicare was billed to the tune of \$14 million for just 1 year.

We cannot allow this to happen, this fraud to continue in the Medicare Program.

#### MEDICARE FRAUD AND ABUSE

(Ms. ESHOO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the GAO issued a report outlining charges against ABC Home Health Care for defrauding American taxpayers through the Medicare Program. The Democrats want to reform the Medicare system, but you do not do it by picking the seniors' health care pockets dry.

What we want to do is to scrap the tax break plan and stop this private sector ripoff of the public sector.

The GAO said that this Georgia company did do this: \$140,000 for airplane costs; \$21,000 for a pilot's salary; \$16,000 for alcohol at a leadership conference.